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STAFF NOTES:

Soviet Union Eastern Europe

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

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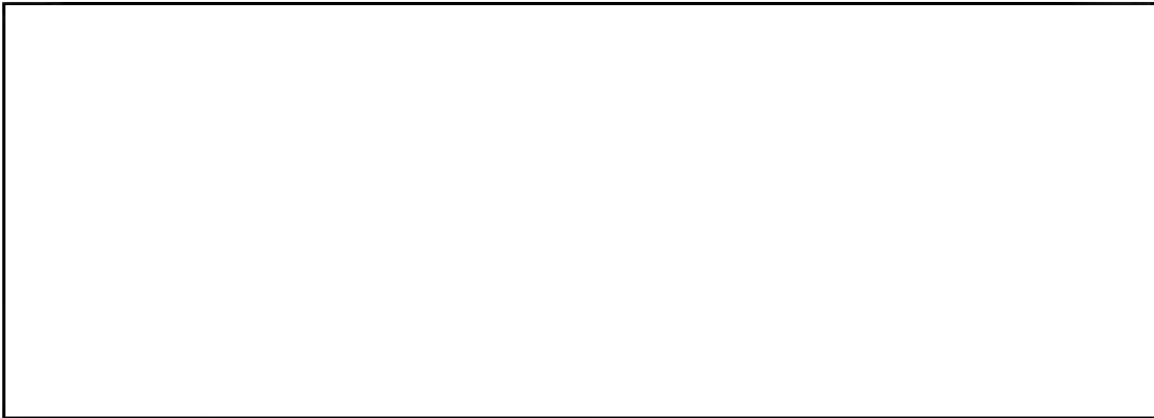
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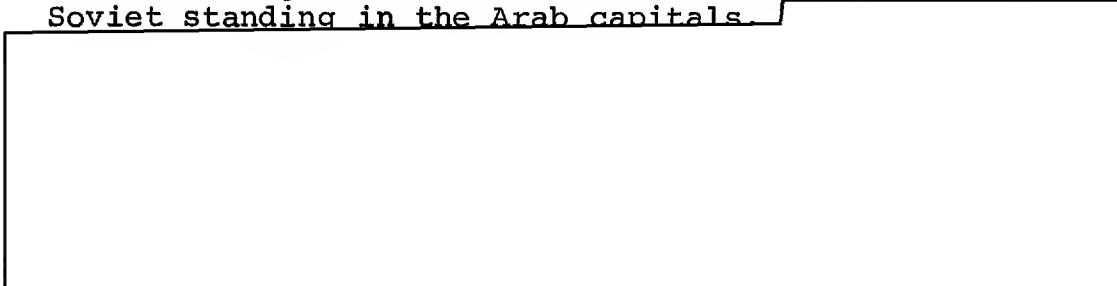
Moscow's Reaction To
Arab Moves To Expel Israel from UN

Moscow has reacted gingerly to moves to expel Israel from the UN and may be working privately to discourage the Arabs.

Soviet media have barely alluded to the Arab proposals, and when, belatedly, they reported on the Islamic conference in Jidda, no mention was made of its resolution calling for Israeli expulsion.



Moscow would obviously prefer to avoid having to cast a vote on the issue of Israeli expulsion. A positive ballot would confirm Israel's suspicions of the Soviets and would thus undercut Moscow's efforts to win a role for itself in the Middle East negotiations. A negative vote or an abstention would damage Soviet standing in the Arab capitals.



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Will the Dissidents Lose Sakharov?

25X1 The regime's decision last week to permit the wife of leading dissident spokesman Andrey Sakharov to receive treatment in Italy for an eye condition [redacted] could be part of a campaign to put pressure on the ailing Sakharov himself to emigrate.

25X1 Sakharov told Western newsmen last week that his wife was anxious to leave as soon as possible because she was going blind. [redacted] she is having second thoughts about leaving because of her husband's own poor health. Sakharov reportedly suffered a heart attack in early June. According to his wife, he now receives weekly electrocardiograms, and the results are "bad."

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Both Sakharovs probably are aware that the regime may not allow Mrs. Sakharov to return to the USSR after completion of her treatment. Although Sakharov at the moment is determined to stay in the country and carry on his activities, the threat of permanent separation from his wife could eventually persuade him--if his health allows--to seek an exit permit. While the regime may have doubts about letting a man known in the West as the "father of the Soviet H-bomb" leave the country, the damage such a loss of its major spokesman would do to the dissident "movement" in the USSR could outweigh security and other considerations.

Sakharov's gradual slide into dissident activities during the 1960s resulted in his being slowly cut off from his work in the Soviet nuclear program. He was finally fired and his security clearance lifted shortly after the June 1968 publication in the West of his renowned essay, "Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom." Since May 1969 he has held a relatively low-ranking job as part-time senior researcher at the Lebedev

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Institute of Physics in Moscow, where he is reportedly being limited to theoretical work. Sakharov, who has remained a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences throughout his travails, is an experimental physicist, and this limitation has effectively ended his professional career.

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Czechoslovakia: Dubcek Strikes
Back Against Husak

Alexander Dubcek has reportedly written another letter, this one sharply questioning the "socialist credentials" of party and state chief Gustav Husak. The Western press, including *The Washington Post*, recently published extracts from the letter that Dubcek allegedly wrote to rebut Husak's attack on him in mid-April.

The complete text of the letter (which according to rumors was written as early as May) is still not available, but the widespread publication of excerpts could force Husak to readdress the politically sensitive question of how to handle Dubcek. The moderately conservative Husak would prefer to ignore the issue, but ultra-conservatives in the leadership may try to use the letter to renew the earlier inflammatory campaign against Dubcek.

A recent edition of the German-language version of a Czechoslovak emigre journal published what it claimed were excerpts from the letter:

- I grew up in a milieu of the revolutionary movement; at the time you were a bourgeois lawyer, my family helped build socialism in the USSR.*
- At a time when you were in Katyn as a member of the official delegation of the Fascist Slovak state, my family was already working for the underground.*
- At a time when you were sitting in the cafes of Bratislava with Sano Mach (minister of interior in the independent Slovak state that was a puppet of Nazi Germany), my family risked its life for the socialist revolution.*

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--At the time when you allegedly prepared the Slovak Uprising (1944), my family had long been fighting with arms in hand, and my brother had already given his life.

Dubcek's claims for his family are true, but some of his charges against Husak are not. Husak-- as he often proudly points out--comes from peasant stock, and he is a self-made man. Although there have been some whispers about Husak's relations with the "fascist" Slovak state during World War II, in fact, for much of the war, he actively worked with the resistance. Husak, however, is vulnerable to accusations about his relationship with Mach. The two had already been long-time friends when Mach intervened to obtain Husak's release from the Gestapo. After the war, Husak tried to lighten Mach's sentence for treason. His friendship with Mach was used against him, when Husak was purged from the party in the early 1950s. Although Husak was exonerated of the charge, he must be sensitive to its reappearance.

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The Persian Gulf: Soviet-Sponsored
Diplomatic Activity

The Soviet Union, eager to strengthen its position on the Arab side of the Persian Gulf, where its only embassy is in Kuwait, is again attempting to establish diplomatic relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

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The Soviet diplomatic initiative suggests that Moscow may detect a more favorable climate in the gulf as a result of King Faysal's death in late March. In 1972, Sheikh Zayid--the UAE president--and several other gulf rulers appeared to be ready to exchange ambassadors with Moscow, but backed off in deference to Faysal's strong opposition to an expanded Soviet presence in the gulf.

Whether the UAE embraces the current Soviet-inspired overtures may depend on how Zayid reads the Saudi position. Those UAE officials who look favorably on ties with a communist government--we believe UAE Foreign Minister Suwaydi is among them--have undoubtedly been heartened by some signals of a softening by Riyadh on the issue.

Saudi Crown Prince Fahd has recently stated that his country follows an open-door policy toward all countries and that "we want good relations with both East and West.... We will conduct our relations with foreign states in the light of our best efforts and according to the position adopted by those countries

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towards our causes." It is highly doubtful that the Saudi government will itself make any abrupt policy changes, but Fahd may be signaling a long-term shift in Riyadh's traditionally strong anti-communist policy. This could certainly encourage Moscow to pursue its efforts in the gulf.

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USSR To Assemble Electronic
Calculators Under US License

The Soviets have awarded a \$7-million contract to a US firm to provide technology, equipment, and parts for the assembly of hand-held electronic calculators in the USSR. The US firm will help establish a Soviet factory with the capacity to produce one million calculators per year.

The contract calls for the shipment of unembargoed technical data, equipment, and parts. Semiconductor components of the type used in these calculators can be shipped freely to Communist countries.

Calculators that are currently produced in quantity by the Soviets are bulky desk-top models. Although the Soviets apparently have manufactured a small number of hand-held types, possibly with assistance from Japan, they have not mastered the difficult technology needed to mass produce them or their electronic components.

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New Soviet Minister of the Auto Industry

Viktor Nikolayevich Polyakov has succeeded Aleksandr Tarasov, who died recently, as USSR minister of the automobile industry, *Pravda* reported on July 18.

Polyakov has been a deputy minister of the auto industry for the past ten years. He is perhaps best known for his role in planning, organizing, and directing the Volga Motor Vehicle Plant in Tolyatti, which began turning out cars in 1970. In 1974 he became director general of the Volga Production Association, a collection of enterprises that includes the Tolyatti facility. Polyakov and his colleagues have solicited Western (particularly Italian) help for the huge installation.

The 60-year-old Polyakov is a trained engineer who came up through the ranks; he directed the Moscow Small Auto Plant between 1961 and 1965. Until recently, he was one of two deputy ministers who simultaneously headed production facilities. The younger deputy minister--Lev Vasilyev--has been in charge of the Kama Motor Vehicle Plant at Naberezhnyye Chelny since 1969.

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